

*David Charles'*

# Boston Vintage Sports Flashback

ISSUE #17 – September 1, 2023

JULY 26, 1913

## COLLINS GIVES RED SOX A WIN

**Bases Full of Champs When He Triples in Second**

**By T.H. Murnane, The Boston Globe**

The champion Red Sox gave one of their high class performances yesterday at Fenway Park before 12,000 enthusiastic baseball fans, and forced the Chicago White Sox to surrender to the tune of 4 to 1.

The game was a thriller. Brilliant plays marked every inning of the nine, with the Boston men turning in several of the cleverest stunts seen in the park this season. Collins, Hooper, Lewis, Engle and others were cheered to the echo several times, but perhaps the most conspicuous success was Ray Collins, the Vermont farmer.

Collins pitched a remarkable game, and but for a careless throw to third in the ninth by Speaker, when he had no chance to head off the runner, Collins would have scored a clean shutout. To add to the glory won by Collins we must allude to the real timely hit of the game. It came in the second inning, with two on and two out. Carrigan was passed intentionally, to bring up Collins up with the bases full.

It came down to a case of two and three; then Ray took a healthy swing at a fast one, and the ball went tearing down inside the right-field foul line while three men went over the home plate, Collins landing safely at third, and scoring when the ball got away from Hal Chase.

### Three Other Boston Brilliants

It was a winning hit with a vengeance, for the home team was unable to score after that, and Collins was forced to return to the box after his hard run and work harder than ever, showing that he was in excellent physical condition.

Harry Hooper made a remarkable catch in the second. Fournier hit the ball well inside the line, headed for the extreme corner in right. Hooper went across the field under a full head of steam, and by jumping managed to fork the ball with his left hand, and received a great round of applause.

Lewis ran up the bank and pulled down a long drive, while Engle made a great one-handed stop of Lord's grounder and tossed it to Collins for an out. It was clever ball playing.

Bill Carrigan caught a grand game and threw in superb style. Wagner, gardner and Janvrin were all on their toes yesterday, and

the Chicago outfield never worked in smoother fashion.

"Rebel" Russell was sent in to make a real fight for the game, and he pitched swell ball, Ray Collins alone turning the winning trick off his delivery. Russell was taken out for a pinch hitter in the eighth, and "Buck" O'Brien came in to face old friends for the first time. He received a perfect ovation, showing that the "Buckarino" is not without friends in this neck of the woods.

It was a trying time for "Buck," but he was there with plenty of confidence, striking out Hooper and then fanning Tris Speaker, for which he received a cheer that rocked the grandstand. "Buck" was pitching real ball. Lewis was next thrown out at first, and everyone was happy.

Five hits were made off Collins, which was rare good pitching, for Ray forces all to hit the ball. This was simply keeping up the remarkable work that he has been doing this season, no one in the business showing better form.

The whole Boston team have showed improved form since returning to their own grounds, and the morning practice they now can have will improve their stick work.

The day was ideal for the game, and the crowd was really large, considering the attraction. Those that were out were entertained with a real ball game, and judging from the applause all were well pleased with the final result.

### Collins' Slam Comes in Second

Rath opened the game with a single. Lord struck out. Chase flied to left, and Bodie hit to Gardner, who ran down Rath.

Janvrin hit to weaver, who threw over Chase's head, Janvrin going to second and arriving there a full second and arriving there a full second before the ball did, to hear Umpire Sheridan call him out. This was one of the worst decisions ever given at the grounds.

Hooper walked, but was thrown trying for second. Speaker drove a liner to left that Fournier pulled in close to the line.

The visitors went out in order in the second, John Collins drawing a pass, but going out on Carrigan's fine throw to Wagner, and Hooper making a remarkable one-handed jumping catch of Fournier's swat.

With one down, Gardner and Engle singled. Wagner flied out to right. Carrigan was passed, filling the bases. Then Collins cleared the bases with a fine triple, and scored when Chase muffed the throw-in.

Both teams went out in order in the third. Lord opened the fourth with a single. Chase struck out, and Lord was doubled up trying for second. Bodie gave Lewis a chance to climb the bank like a cat and pull down his drive.

### Gardner's Peculiar Blunder

Gardner walked. Engle raised a ball to right center that

dropped in front of Collins and went over his shoulder. Gardner had reached second base, but got it into his head that the ball had been caught, and ran back to first, with the coacher and the whole crowd trying to drive him back. So Gardner was out when he should have been on third, and Engle was shy a base hit. the next two men went out on flies.

Schalk was passed in the fifth. Collins struck out. Fournier flied to Hooper. Weaver singled to center and the base-runners moved up on Speaker's wild throw to Janvrin. Russell sent a long one to Lewis.

With one down, Hooper singled, but was caught napping off first.

In the sixth the White Sox went out at first base, Ray Collins assisting on two.

With two down, Gardner made two bases on a wild throw by Russell. Chase made a great play on Engle's grounder.

The visitors went out in order in the seventh. Carrigan flied out to left. Ray Collins bunted. Janvrin flied to left.

In the eighth Fournier sent up a weak fly for Janvrin that Harold made a bad mess of - a weakness of his. Weaver singled. Kuhn, batting for Russell, struck out, and Rath was thrown out by Janvrin.

#### **Enters Mr. O'Brien of Brockton**

O'Brien then came in to pitch for Chicago, and was given a fine reception by the crowd. Hooper struck out. Then Speaker also was disposed of on strikes, to the enjoyment of the crowd. Lewis was thrown out at first.

In the ninth Lord was out at first. Engle handed the ball to Ray Collins. Chase hit to right for two bases, and scored when Speaker threw over Gardner's head. Bodie sent up a high fly for Engle and Schalk rolled one to Collins.

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JUNE 27, 1980

## **BURGMEIER RIDES TO RESCUE AGAIN, 3-2**

**By Steve Marantz, The Boston Globe**

One of Nature's ancient forces - wind - and one of its newest phenomenons - Tom Burgmeier - joined up last night to lead the Red Sox past the baltimore Orioles, 3-2, at fenway Park.

The wind blew in from left and Burgmeier blew in from the bullpen for his 13th save. And with four double plays and a winning run resulting from a stolen base that began as a pickoff, the Red Sox looked like the Orioles of 1979.

Cuck Rainey, the Boston starter who went 7.1 innings and whose eighth win was saved by Burgmeier, said, "It's kind of like deja vu, winning all these games like Baltimore did. And burgmeier is probably more responsible than anybody.

Burgmeier came on with one out and Kiko Garcia on first in the eighth. Oriole pinch hitter Benny Ayala hit a fly to left that Earl Weaver said "is off the wall" if not for the wind. In the ninth, Eddie Murray led off with a fly to left that Don Zimmer said "make my heart drop" and Weaver said "is in the screen," again, if not for the wind.

But it wasn't a free ride for Burgy, because after pinch hitter Mark Corey ripped a double, he struck out Doug DeCinces on a

3-2 pitch to end the game. "With the wind blowing in like that, you can challenge them a little more," said Burgmeier.

Lefthander Mike Flanagan, the Orioles' starter and last year's Cy Young Award winner, was in his sixth 3-2 game this season, and his third 3-2 defeat. Flanagan brought about his own downfall in the sixth inning, when the Sox produced their winning run.

Fred Lynn singled with one out, and with two outs, Flanagan's move to first caught him red-footed as he broke for second. But first baseman Eddie Murray's throw glanced off Lynn's shoulder as he was sliding. Butch Hobson followed with a single to left for his 15th RBI in 18 games and fifth game-winning hit.

Weaver did not blame Murray for the throw off Lynn's shoulder. Instead he placed the culpability on Flanagan for allowing Lynn too great a jump. "Eddie made a perfect throw," said Weaver. "They're getting too much off Mike to make the play. If the runner and the baseball are there at the same time, the runner is getting too much.

"There's nothing we can do on that. Eddie's hit three runners already. maybe we can go to the second baseman coming in from the other side, but if he's in the hole for a lefthanded hitter, we can't do that."

Four double plays helped Rainey survive a difficult start. Baltimore scored its two runs in the first and had its leadoff batter on in each of the first four innings. The first double play came with the bases loaded in the first inning on Terry Crowley's grounder to Dave Stapleton, and Rainey left a runner at third by striking out John Lowenstein.

In all, Rainey induced 11 grounders, throwing mostly sinkers. "I had been trying to pitch too fine, throwing too many breaking balls," said Rainey. "I decided to go out and throw the sinker and get as many ground balls as I could."

In the fifth, the Sox pulled even on a walk to Carl Yastrzemski, Dwight Evans' double to the corner in left, Gary Allenson's sacrifice fly and Rick Burleson's RBI single to center. Allenson had two singles and is now 5 for 10 since Carlton Fisk went out seven games ago.

Zimmer's decision to use Burgmaier, a lefthander, with the righthanded Ayala on the Oriole bench and two switch hitters - Ken Singleton and Murray - next in the order, might have seemed unusual at another point in time. But with the wind roaring in and Burgmeier coming off his brilliant 4.1 inning, one-hit sting in New York Wednesday, it seemed logical.

"I told Rainey when I took him out that he did a helluva job," said Zimmer. "I hated to take him out, but I wanted to bring in Burgy to get their big switch hitters facing into the wind. I didn't want anything blowing into the right-field seats."

When the Sox win - and they are now 14-7 in one-run games - it all seems so logical. Tom Burgmaier and a lusty wind from left are two elements it's not nice to fool with.

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### **Boston Vintage Sports Flashback**

Published every 2 weeks by David C. Southwick. Published for informational. Research and entertainment purposes only. Publisher may be reached at [soxpapers@gmail.com](mailto:soxpapers@gmail.com)

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APRIL 15, 1912

## The Play in Detail

# BRAVES RESUME WINNING WAYS

## Even Great Mathewson Fails to Save Giants - Score, 3-0

By T.H. Murnane, The Boston Globe

The Boston Braves started right after the New York Giants yesterday, and in less than one hour and a half they had the National League champions down and out, the score being 3 to 0. Things broke rather poorly for McGraw's boys at Brooklyn last week, and he decided to send the great Christy Mathewson after the Braves.

Christy pitched a pretty fair sort of a game, and passed only one man, but the Giants were up against too formidable opposition in "Hub" Perdue, who went through the game with flying colors, Mathewson alone having a chance to put the Giants in the game with a safe drive in the second, with men at second and third and two down; but Matty flied out to Sweeney, Meyers was passed intentionally and Matty was thrown out by Sweeney. In each case Kling refused to throw to second when the runners started for there, and he called the turn both times.

Five hits, one a double, and two stolen bases by the Giants in the first four innings made the Braves' outlook discouraging, as Mathewson had held the local boys to two singles and not a Brave had passed the second base.

### Perdue to the Fore

Then Perdue commenced to pitch like a real champion, holding the New York sluggers to two singles in the last five innings, and only one Giant finding his way as far as third base. He got there, with two down, on a pass and a wild throw over second by Kling. Then Perdue forced the next man to send up a foul fly for Kling, and the Braves were out of the hole, with two-thirds of the game over and the Giants laboring for wind.

A pass to Sweeney and singles by Campbell and Miller were good for one run in the sixth, the visitors getting off easy, thanks to some sharp fielding by Snodgrass and Mathewson.

Johnnie Kling smashed the ball far over the left field fence in the seventh, and Boston was two runs to the good, the smile on Johnny Ward's face looming up like a Texas sunrise.

In the eighth Campbell drove a liner to left center that broke through Devore. Then Miller and Spratt singled and the Braves became three runs to the good. Herzog opened the ninth with a single, but never passed first base, McCormick closing the fun with a short fly to Sweeney.

Snodgrass, who played first base in place of Merkle, put up a superb game and Devore made one fine catch in left, this being the full extent of the noteworthy fielding by the Giants. For Boston, Spratt played a clever game at short, Campbell covered lots of ground in center and Kling caught in his masterly style.

The New York men were on their toes on the coaching lines, but were forced to take a beating as the Braves played the better ball. The same teams will meet again today, and the chances are that Marquard will do the pitching for the visitors.

With one down in the opening inning, Doyle hit the first ball pitched to center for two bases. Snodgrass flied out to Spratt, and Murray was called out on strikes. The Braves went out in order.

With one down in the second, Herzog singled. Shafer was thrown out by Kling. Meyers singled and stole second, but Mathewson flied out to Sweeney. For the second time the Braves went down in order.

With one down in the third, Doyle drew a pass, but was worked into a double play when Snodgrass pounded to Spratt, who touched second and shot the ball to first.

With two down Perdue and Sweeney singled. Then Campbell gave Doyle a fast grounder that he tossed to second for a forceout.

Murray opened the fourth with a single. Becker sent a short fly to Miller. Herzog forced Murray. Shafer singled, sending Herzog to third, and then stole second. "Chief" Meyers was passed. It was three and two, and the men on bases were all on the move when Mathewson hit to Sweeney for the third out at first. For the third time the Braves went down in order.

In the fifth it was the Giants who went out in order. With one down, McDonald singled, Kling hit to Herzog and the Boston captain was thrown out at first. Perdue struck out.

With one down in the sixth, Becker drew a pass. Herzog flied out to Campbell, who made a clever running-in catch. Becker stole second and went to third on Kling's wild throw. Then Shafer flied out to Kling.

Sweeney drew a pass. Campbell bunted and beat Meyers' high throw to first, Sweeney going to third. Miller singled past Herzog, scoring Sweeney. Kaiser tried for a sacrifice, pushing the ball to Snodgrass, who shot it to third for a forceout. Houser flied out to left, and Spratt was thrown out by Mathewson.

Meyers opened the seventh with a single, and Groh ran for the big Chief. Mathewson sacrificed. Devore flied out to Campbell. Doyle was thrown out by Sweeney.

With one down, Johnnie Kling discovered Mathewson's groove ball and smashed it high over the left-field fence for a homer. Perdue was thrown out at first and Becker pulled down Sweeney's long drive.

The Giants went out in order in the eighth. Devore muffed. Campbell's line drive and Vincent went to third on a short passed ball. Miller singled, scoring Campbell. Kaiser sacrificed. Houser hit to Mathewson and Miller was caught at third. Spratt singled, but McDonald struck out.

It was now up to the ninth. With Herzog up and the score three to nothing, a single to center made the Giant coaches get busy. Shafer flied out to center and the crowd howled when Perdue got Wilson on three strikes. Then McCormick went to bat for Mathewson and sent up a weak fly for Bill Sweeney and the game was over.

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JUNE 9, 1947

# BARRETT ALLOWS ONE HIT, BRAVES DEFEAT CUBS, 1-0

By Jack Barry, The Boston Globe

Charles "Red" Barrett, considered a question mark at the season's outset, fashioned a brilliant one-hitter last night at Braves Field before 25,724 enthralled fans, blanking the Chicago Cubs, 1 to 0.

The only hit off Barrett came in the sixth inning with two outs when the opposing moundsman, Hank Borowy, with a batting average of .087, hit a Barrett slider over the head of shortstop Sibby Sisti. It was what the wags call a hump-backed liner.

The victory not only enabled the Braves to switch spots with the Cubs in the National League race, but also moved the hustling Boston club to within one game of the pace-setting New York Giants and only half a game behind the second-place Brooklyn Dodgers.

Barrett was hit, and hard at times, let there be no doubt about that. But, at least a half-dozen line drives dropped into the mitts of Braves fielders.

Tommy Holmes saved Barrett's bacon in the third with an amazing catch off Eddie Waitkus. Waitkus drove a long liner to right. Holmes grasped the screen with his left hand, boosted himself into the air and grabbed the ball with his gloved hand. At the end of the inning, Barrett waited at the top of the dugout for Holmes and after shaking hands with him, walked into the dugout with his arm around the outfielder. The crowd gave Holmes a tremendous hand when he came to bat in the fifth.

## Second 1-0 Defeat

Thus Borowy stroked the blow which robbed the Tribal hurler of a no-hit game, the second time he has been so victimized. Borowy pitched effective if under-par ball for him, suffering his season's second 1-0 defeat after a run of six consecutive victories.

Barrett's game was won in the seventh. Holmes hit to short left. Specs Torgeson singled off second baseman Lonnie Frey, Holmes going to third.

Bob Elliott then drilled a hit to center, to score Holmes.

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SEPTEMBER 15, 1974

# PATRIOTS SHOW DOLPHINS HOW IT'S DONE, 34-24

By Will McDonough, The Boston Globe

FOXBORO - Get one thing straight from the beginning. It

wasn't a fluke.

"They beat us in every possible way," said the vanquished Don Shula, still composed after his world champion Miami Dolphins were stunned, 34-24, by an aroused Patriots team yesterday.

"Offense, defense, special teams. . .and on the scoreboard," added Shula, "they were just better than us."

And as ridiculous as it might seem to some, the Patriots were just that yesterday in Schaefer Stadium - better than the Super Bowl champions - as they decimated the dandy Dolphin defense with a devastating attack led by Jim Plunkett.

"This was an emotional game for us," said Plunkett, who kept the howling crowd of 55,006 in a frenzy with his pinpoint passing and field leadership.

"We knew who we were playing and that we were up against, but we also thought we could win. We had a good idea of what we wanted to do against them, and we did it."

Plunkett and his offensive mates did what no other team has done to this great Miami powerhouse in the last three years. They took the football and stuffed it down the Dolphins' throats, running for twice as much yardage on the ground - 196 yards to 89.

"The Patriots controlled the line of scrimmage all day," said Shula. "They were aggressive and we weren't."

From the opening moments, everyone in the stadium could sense an upset. Plunkett was the embodiment of precision, taking his team upfield 75 yards in 11 plays for a 7-0 lead following the opening kickoff.

"We tried to keep them off balance," said Plunkett, who surprised the Dolphins by hitting Randy Vataha with a 27-yard pass on the first play of the game. Mack Herron, dynamite all afternoon, finished off the opening drive by ripping over right tackle for 14 yards and the touchdown.

The Dolphins came right back at the start of the second period when Larry Csonka smacked over from one yard out to tie it.

However, Plunkett, on his way to completing 14 of 24 passes for 177 yards, never lost his poise. Right away, he marched his team for another touchdown as Herron and Sam Cunningham started belting into the middle of the Dolphins defense.

"Our offensive line was great," said Plunkett. "That's why we ran the ball so well - and because we could run, it opened them up for our passing."

Plunkett finished this march with a nifty 13-yard pass to Reggie Rucker in the corner of the end zone, after Rucker had beaten two defenders by running a pretty pattern.

And right here, the game broke wide open for the Patriots.

Miami started making mistakes - the kind the Patriots usually make, but didn't yesterday. Charley Leigh fumbled the next kickoff, and Patriot Steve Schubert ran it to the six. John Smith converted that mistake into three points with his 21-yard field goal.

Mistake No. 2 came minutes later when rookie linebacker Sam Hunt picked off a Bob Griese pass and ran it back 26 yards to the Miami eight. Two plays later, Plunkett slipped down the line to his left, faked an option pitch to Cunningham, held the ball himself and cut back in from the five-yard line for the score. It was now 24-7 for the Pats, who had just scored 17 points on the Dolphins in eight minutes.

The Dolphins never recovered, but they gave it a helluva shot as Griese had to abandon his running game and started throwing.

"We weren't having any success running the ball," said

Griese, "and that's what we do best."

Before the half, Griese passed the Dolphins into position for a 33-yard field goal by Garo Yepremian.

The Patriots countered by ripping 71 yards in 11 plays in the third period for a touchdown which put them in front, 31-10. Cunningham got this one, flying 14 yards for the score on a draw play, the last five all in the air.

Griese, superb in defeat, now had to become a one-man show. He was fighting the clock, and the lack of any running help as Csonka and Jim Kiick were held to 72 yards in 28 carries between them.

Down by three touchdowns with 20 minutes left to play, Griese fired a 13-yard scoring pass to Marlin Briscoe for one, and directed a plodding 80-yard, 16-play drive for another TD, with Csonka scoring from the three on a smash into the middle.

Here, with 4:26 left to play, Shula gambled. He went for the onside kick, but the Patriots recovered and held the ball for two more minutes.

Griese got it back on his own 20, with two minutes left, hungry for the tying touchdown and the first overtime period in NFL regular season history.

But it wasn't to be. Ray Hamilton ruined it for the Dolphins by roaring in to drop Griese for a 10-yard loss, and the Dolphins turned over the ball on their own 17 with a minutes and a half to play. Thirty seconds later, following three Miami timeouts, Smith put it out of reach with his 26-yard field goal, producing an uncatchable 10-point lead.

"There's only one thing that happened here today," said Dolphins all-pro safety Jake Scott, "they just beat the hell out of us."

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NOVEMBER 16, 1986

## **PATRIOTS REPEAT HISTORY, 30-28**

### **Another Anaheim Miracle**

**By Ron Borges, The Boston Globe**

ANAHEIM, Calif. - It was a volleyball play in a volleyball town.

First the ball went up into what remained of a blue California sky. Then Stanley Morgan went up for the set, guiding it back gently toward his teammate.

Then Irving Fryar went up for the spike.

And then the Los Angeles Rams went down for the count.

With no time on the clock and no apparent chance left for victory, Fryar caught a Tony Eason pass in the end zone that was tipped over four Rams defenders by Morgan to hand the Patriots an improbable 30-28 victory yesterday that no one could quite believe.

"It wasn't Hail Mary Right," said New England coach Raymond Berry. "It was Miracle Right."

It was indeed a miracle that the Patriots improved their record to 8-3 to remain two games behind the New York Jets (10-1) in the AFC East, because they had been outplayed from the moment rookie quarterback Jim Everett came into the Rams' huddle for the first time this season with 14:35 left in the first

half and his team trailing, 13-0.

But there is no reason why Lourdes should be the only place where miracles happen. And if you ask New England sports fans for another nominee, it would have to be the orange and green edifice called Anaheim Stadium, where two have happened in five weeks.

It was five weeks ago to the day that Dave Henderson walked toward home plate here with the Red Sox' season as dead as the Patriots were yesterday. And then?

Bang. Home run, history, hysteria.

"There we were, two outs, two on, bottom of the ninth," Patriot center Pete Brock said. "And Henderson hits another one."

When the Patriots got the ball back for the last time with 1:54 to play, they trailed, 28-23, and had 11 Ram defenders and 87 yards of real estate between them and victory. It seemed too much to ask for a team that had already blown a 13-0 lead, fumbled two punts and been riddled by a rookie quarterback who had never played a down in the NFL to drive the length of the field and score.

"I saw it go into his hands and I looked at his feet and they were both inbound," said Rams defensive back Vince Newsome, who had joined teammates Nolan Cromwell, Jerry Gray and Mickey Sutton in the corner of the end zone along with Morgan, Fryar and Cedrick Jones.

"We defend against that in practice all the time. The ball comes up and we knock it down. That's never happened before. I don't even know how to act."

Try chagrined.

Things had started out well enough for the Patriots, who led, 13-0, after two Tony Franklin field goals and a blocked punt that Rod McSwain returned 31 yards for a touchdown in the second quarter.

At that juncture, the Ram offense was as invisible in Anaheim as cold weather. Eric Dickerson was doing nothing but getting bowled over and quarterback Steve Dils was showing the world why he is a career bench-warmer.

But then along came Everett at 1:43 Pacific Standard Time, and the future was now for the Rams.

Everett's first drive produced nothing, but when Fryar fumbled his second punt of the afternoon and the Rams recovered at New England's 34, everything began to change.

Back came Everett on the next play, and he rifled a 34-yard touchdown pass to Henry Ellard to make it 13-7 with 13:02 left in the half.

Just over 11 minutes later, Everett (12 for 19, 193 yards, three touchdowns) delivered the air mail again when he found Barry Redden wide open off a scramble for a 24-yard score and a 14-13 lead.

But with a minute and a half remaining in the half, the Patriots issued a warning of what was to come when they moved 75 yards in nine plays before stalling out at the 1-yard line and settling for Franklin's third field goal, a 19-yarder that gave them a 16-14 halftime lead.

"Those points were pretty big," Craig James said.

Indeed they were but they didn't seem so after Redden ran for a 11-yard touchdown early in the third quarter to give Los Angeles the lead, 21-16.

In fact, those points appeared haunting because they were another example of the failures of the patriot running game.

Four times before Franklin kicked, New England had had the ball at the 2, the 1 or the 1-foot line.

Four times they had failed to move it an inch.

"We were all thinking about that," James said.

there was more food for thought in the fourth quarter when

Leroy Irvin intercepted his second Eason pass, returned it 22 yards and then appeared to fumble it back into Tony Collins' hands.

Well, it didn't appear he had fumbled. He had fumbled.

But referee Fred Silva ruled that back judge Jimmy Rosser had inadvertently blown his whistle. No louder whistle ever sounded in New England.

"By the rules. . .the inadvertent whistle makes the ball go back to the man who fumbled no matter who recovers it," Silva said.

So the Rams had it again at the Patriot 39 and Everett went to work, throwing a 24-yard screen pass to Dickerson to set the stage for a 20-yard scoring pass to Ellard, whose eight catches for 129 yards were the biggest day of the year for a Ram receiver.

"It was nice to be back in the flow of the game," Ellard said. "It was like we'd been working together for a year."

Unfortunately for the Rams, Everett and the rest of his passing offense stopped working at that point, going into a conservative shell that allowed New England to put itself into position for one final, desperation play.

First, Fryar broke wide open on a short pattern for a 6-yard touchdown catch that made it 28-23 with just over seven minutes left.

But not even that seemed to be enough after the Rams came back out with Dickerson (102 yards, 24 carries) and hammered away inside the tackles.

All too quickly the minutes began to tick away and the Rams continued to run. Dickerson over right tackle for 6. Dickerson over left guard for 3. Dickerson around right end for 6. Dickerson around right end again for 8.

But then, facing a third-and-1 situation at the Patriot 33, the Rams were called for holding, and everything changed.

Instead of grinding out another play and perhaps forcing an additional 30 seconds off the clock, Everett fired an incompleteness on third down that used up just six seconds and allowed New England just enough time for one more miracle.

Actually, there was time for two, the first coming when, with 13 seconds left, Eason broke away from the Rams and scrambled 26 yards to the Los Angeles 25 before he spied the scoreboard clock and dove out of bounds despite the best efforts of Irvin to dissuade him.

There were three seconds left for the Patriots and no chance left for the Rams.

"The chances of that happening again are slim and none," James said. "They're probably not that good. But in the huddle, Tony was as demanding as he could be. He called the play and then he said, 'I'm going to throw it yep down there. You go up and get it. You catch it.'"

"Nobody left that huddle with the intention of dropping that pass. We might catch it in the nickel seats, but somebody was going to catch it."

And somebody named Hendu Fryar did.